

engrained in the rules of Congress, and that both Republicans and Democrats are guilty of exploiting them.

The American people have a right to expect accountability, honesty, and transparency from their government. But every year, Washington relies on a series of budget gimmicks and accounting tricks to conceal or enable deficit spending. With our nation's gross debt over \$15 trillion—as large as our entire economy—Washington must drop the budget games and commit to honest budget practices.

We—as the freshman class—were sent to DC to do things differently and to assist on honest and transparent government.

That's why earlier this week, I, along with 28 of my colleagues, introduced the Honest Budget Act of 2012—an important step to change the way Washington works and instill integrity to the budget process.

This legislation is designed to root out the budget gimmicks most commonly used by politicians to hide the truth, confuse the public, and run up the national debt.

Last year, Senator JEFF SESSIONS from Alabama introduced in the Senate similar legislation to strengthen the Senate's rules against budget trickery. Numerous conservative groups have endorsed Sessions' bill, including the Heritage Foundation, Americans for Tax Reform, and Citizens Against Government Waste.

The House legislation expands this bill with similar rules in the House of Representatives to addresses nine specific budget gimmicks that, since 2005, have cost taxpayers more than \$350 billion and have consistently added to the burgeoning national debt. For example, the legislation makes it more difficult to pass appropriation bills without first approving a budget. No longer will the Senate be allowed to operate without a budget as it has for more than 1000 days. It tightens rules about using "emergency designations" and "disaster designations" to justify off-budget spending. It reveals both the real cost and the real commitment on what the federal government is spending. The bill prevents Congress from relying on phony rescissions, or claiming savings unless the savings are real and genuine. Money that was never going to be spent cannot later be claimed as "savings". That's common sense.

A budget is a plan for the nation's future and an annual financial report to the stockholders of the company—in this case, the American people. We deserve the truth. Mr. Speaker, given what I have witnessed over the last year, the only way to guarantee the truth is to specifically root out and end the gimmicks that so often obscure it.

We are all keenly aware that the number one issue facing America today is jobs. We must continue to do all that we can here in Washington to create an environment that fosters job growth, and we will continue to do that. But we cannot overlook the fact that Washington spends money it does not have. Certainly, this reckless spending spree has contributed greatly towards our downward economy.

The American people deserve a budget system that is accountable, predictable, and real. Regardless of party, Congress and the Administration have not always been up-front with their numbers. It is important that we instill in-

tegrity back to our budget. The President is expected to present Congress with his budget for Fiscal Year 2013. We have a responsibility to our constituents to ensure that the final budget is accurate and any savings included are real savings.

In many respects, the Honest Budget Act of 2012 embodies the spirit of transparency and accountability that unites my freshman class. The bill is a rallying point for those who truly want to put an end to the tricks, gimmicks and empty promises, and for all who believe that the American people deserve a government that they can trust. I look forward to work with my colleagues to see this become reality.

RECOGNIZING WENDY FREITAG

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 2, 2012

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Wendy Freitag for being named a Champion of Change in recognition of her work to prepare Washington communities for unexpected events and developing innovative and creative approaches to emergency preparedness and response.

As the External Affairs Manager for the Washington State Military Department's Emergency Management Division, Wendy Freitag oversees statewide emergency management outreach programs. These programs focus on disaster preparedness public education, private-public partnerships and public information programs. She encourages all residents of Washington State to take preparedness steps in their households and communities before a disaster strikes.

Wendy and her team continue to work on designs for outreach campaigns and programs to empower individuals and organizations to proactively prepare for disasters. They know that in order to effectively respond and recover from disasters, work must be done at the community level. Her team uses a combination of reason and emotion to engage and inspire all community members to become more disaster resilient.

Wendy has tremendous experience in the public and private sectors developing innovative solutions for preparedness. Prior to joining the Emergency Management Division, Wendy worked for a decade on physical security, national crisis management and business continuity projects and teams at Microsoft and the former Washington Mutual Bank.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House of Representatives please join me in recognizing the dedication of Wendy Freitag to helping all Washington residents be better prepared for disasters.

HONORING SURROGATE MICHAEL R. DRESSLER

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 2, 2012

Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend, County

Surrogate Michael Raymond Dressler, for his dedicated leadership and service to our community as the recently re-elected Judge of the Surrogate's Court of Bergen County. Surrogate Dressler has committed himself to a life of public service and I am pleased to recognize him as he continues his distinguished career.

Surrogate Dressler was first elected to be the Bergen County Surrogate Court Judge in 1996. Since then, the public has demonstrated their resounding approval for his work, re-electing him in 2001, 2006, and yet again in 2011. While in office, Judge Dressler has demonstrated his talent for combining innovative community service with reasoned fiscal responsibility. Among many other first's, he created the first Guardianship Monitoring Program in Bergen County, which utilizes volunteers to monitor the work of Court appointed guardians, ensuring they care for the frail and elderly as promised.

Surrogate Dressler also organized the creation of the Surrogate Court's Satellite Office Program in which the services of the Surrogate Court are brought directly to municipalities such as Fort Lee, Ridgewood, Wallington, Norwood and Park Ridge. Surrogate Court employees offer services such as probating of wills and administering estates to those who cannot make the trip to the Surrogate Court in Hackensack. These innovative programs are operated and maintained at no additional taxpayer cost.

Also, as a lifetime advocate for education, Judge Dressler spends a great deal of time promoting awareness of the probate process, the necessity of a Will and other documents, through his speaking tours, addressing numerous civic groups and service organizations. His publication of a comprehensive booklet entitled "How to Probate a Will in Bergen County," is available to all Bergen County residents in English, Spanish, and Korean. These initiatives are just a few of many examples that reflect how his hard work extends well beyond the walls of his office.

As Surrogate, Michael Dressler was elected by his peers and served as President of the Constitutional Officers of New Jersey. He presently serves as a member of the New Jersey Highlands Council. He was honored as the YMCA of Greater Bergen County's Person of the Year in 2009.

Mike Dressler was first elected to public office as Councilman of Cresskill in 1974. In 1983, the people of Cresskill elected him to serve as their Mayor, a position he held until 1991. That same year he was the youngest person ever appointed to the position of Counsel to the County of Bergen—New Jersey's most populous county. His extraordinary dedication to public service serves as an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate my dear friend, Surrogate Michael Raymond Dressler, on another re-election. I join with the grateful residents of Bergen County in thanking him for his innumerable contributions to our community. I am confident that his leadership and dedication to service will continue to improve the lives of countless New Jerseyans.